

I've been

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2024

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On
You



heather hardy

art_irl [2]

“waiting”

winter /

3.30.2024

r chou [p. 5–6]

j eppes

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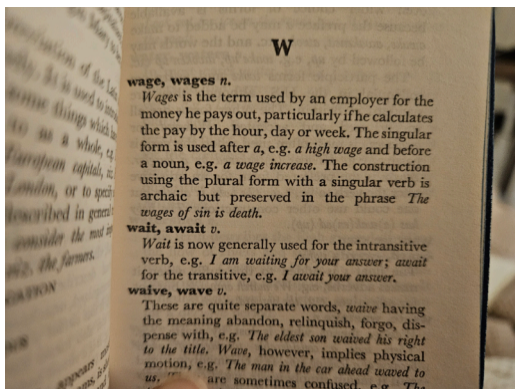
h hardy [p. 1]

m lulic

t simpson

s su

l wanta [p. 10]



Waiting too long poisons desire, but waiting too little pre-empts it; the imagining is in the waiting. In con-



▶ Trending Now

Noticeable Pattern Change Coming Next Week





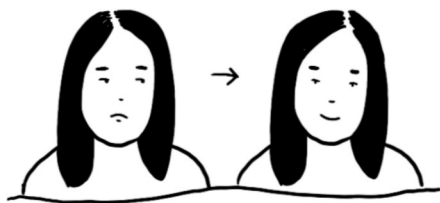
i'm waiting to feel the same

so something can change.





MY MOTHER AND I SHARE
THE SAME UPPER HEAD.
SHE HATES OUR HAIRLINE.

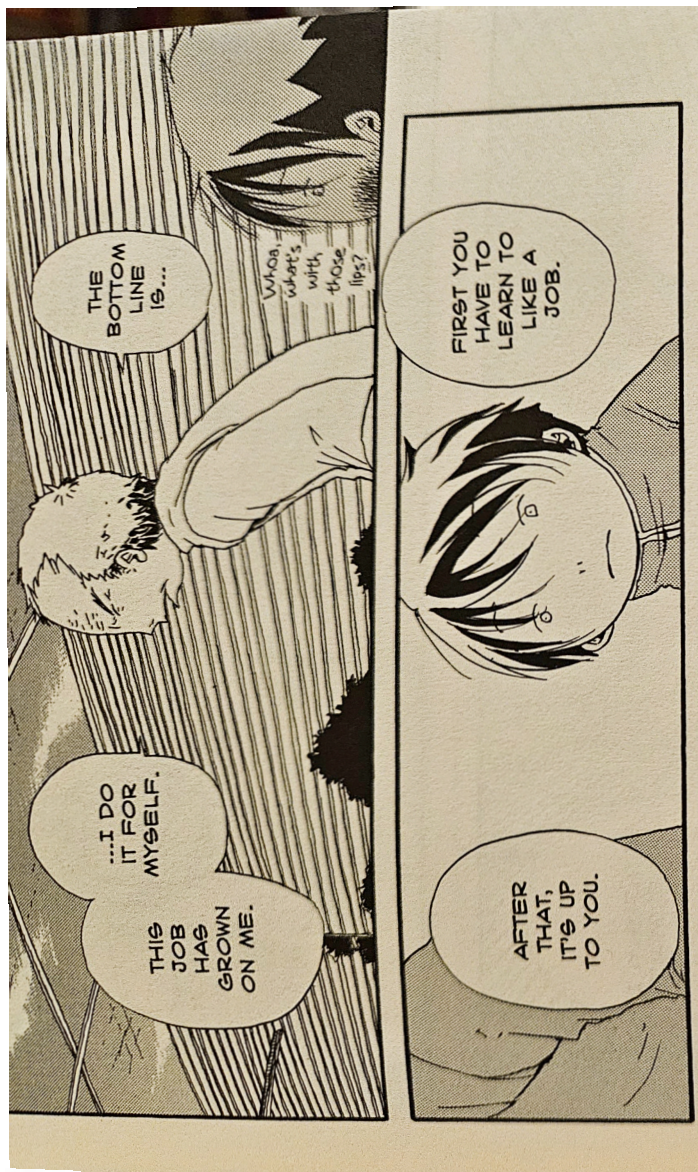


AND TWENTY SOMETHING
YEARS LATER I SWITCHED
MY HAIRPART TO COVER MY
HAIRLINE



WHEN I WAS 5, SHE
PLUCKED MY ENTIRE HAIRLINE
FOR SCHOOL PICTURE DAY





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Supremely Happy**



HEADACHE RELIEF

That's
Really
FAST!



That
Won't
Let You
DOWN!

*Americans Don't Want Talking Movies;
Prefer Silent Film Shows, Says Edison*

Visibility

Unlimited

The DeStINATION

MARIAH EPPES

She went by train. She waited until the last stop and then stayed on. She let the train take her where it was always going.

After a few minutes of underground darkness, the train emerged into light; a soft, stable light that didn't hurt her eyes. From the window she saw low mountains, covered in rough shrubbery. She turned to look out the other side, and there was a settlement—the tops of roofs, lying in a shallow valley.

A metal shelter came into view. An outdoor platform. The train slowed to a halt.

She got up feeling pretty confident. The light was stable but would fade soon. She slung her bag over her shoulder and exited onto the platform.

The elevation of the platform gave her a panorama view of the settlement. It was a replica of an old western town, but not trying to be the real thing. The red and brown paint was unchipped, as if a layer of gloss finish had been added to every beam and plank. Like a set. A colorful set for the amusement of children.

She descended a flight of metal stairs onto a flat, unpaved dirt street. There were no others. Not yet, at least. All she could do was wait.

She decided to take a walk.

No one would be fooled by the replica. Big gauche signage identified each structure: SALOON, INN, BANK. No one would be fooled because there was no one to fool. No one she could see, at least.

She opened the glossy door to the building labeled INN. There was a sort of front desk, a scattering of chairs, placed with not much intention. She saw a folded note standing upright on the desk:

OPEN NIGHTFALL – SUNRISE

The light was fading in measurable stability. She would have to wait until then.

The SALOON would be a good place to bide the time. She pushed through classic batwing doors and into the hall, where there were a few tall round tables and an empty bar. There was no smell of food. No visible dishware. Just furniture and silence.

Where would she eat? She would have to ask the actors. She'd hardly noticed this understanding she'd come to: when people did arrive here, they would certainly be actors. Perhaps they would speak in put-on cowboy accents, tip cheap ten-gallon hats in her direction, wink and straighten their plastic bolo ties. *Yes ma'am, I reckon we can find a vacancy.* They'd play out scenes: a stranger, a shoot-out; they'd haul the renegade to the JAIL. She'd clap and clap. Later she'd go find the bad guy, that actor, and speak to them through the bars of their cell. She'd say how great the show was. The actor would shake their head and caution her not to break the spell—even this conversation was a crime. With a toss of her head she'd trivialize the rules. The actor wouldn't be able to help a smile.

Yes, she'd trivialize the rules. So soon. She could almost hear the echo of future voices in this future-joyful room. The strap of her bag had fallen off her shoulder, into the crease of her elbow. She adjusted it, adjusted her own weight between both feet. That was enough for now. Back out into the dirt.

*

Standing in the center of the shiny town, she was the midpoint in a circle. She looked to her left, toward the mountains. The sky behind the mountains was a flat kind of blue. Fading into a darker blue, then a darker blue, in stages. Measurable. It would be so pretty in full dark. She would be able to see the stars, much more easily than she had at home. And all she had to do was wait.

Wait.

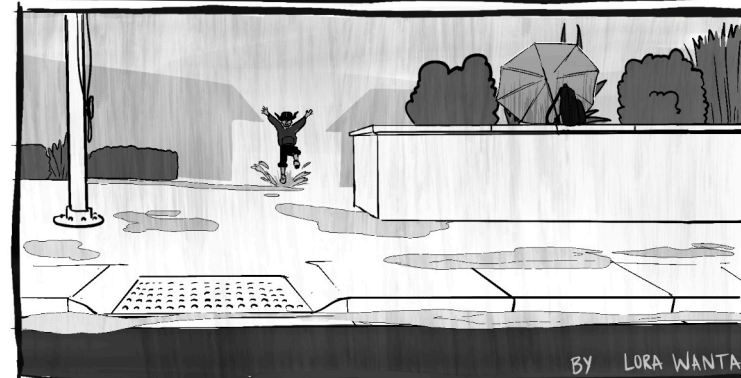
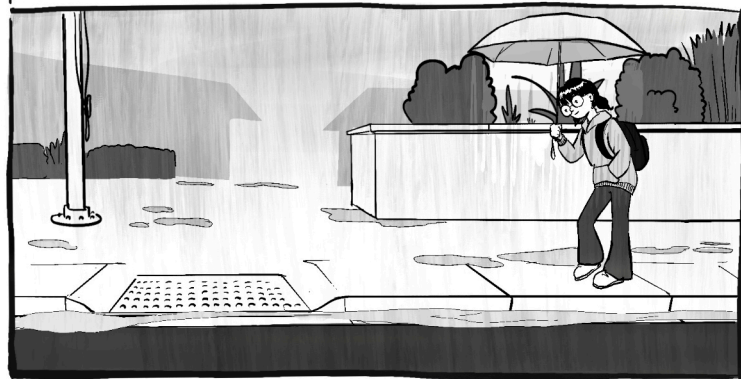
Wait: she could see it now. The shrubbery, there was something wrong with the shrubbery. The shadows of the vegetation weren't changing with the light. The shrubs were disappearing. They had never been shrubs. They were textures; just patterns made with paint.

She glanced at the train station. The one she'd arrived in—now a charming tomato-red passenger car with a steam engine—sat quietly in the increasing dark.

It was all counterfeit.

But she kind of wanted to wait there anyway.

WHEN LEFT



WAITING...

BY LORA WANTA



WAITING Da Y DREAMS

TORI SIMPSON

She was waiting for inspiration to strike. She struck a match, hoping that somehow the word could move between meanings and work on her. She imagined the small flame traveling along the matchstick to dance on her fingertips, climb up her hand, and encircle her wrist. Still nothing.

To pass the waiting, she envisioned herself in a bleak tundra (not hard to do in the depths of winter when the cold never leaves one's bones, even when writing indoors swaddled in many layers). She trudged against icy blasts of wind towards a cave seen in the distance. It was a dash of darkness against the gray-white expanse that promised some degree of shelter, if not warmth. Each step forward she chanted to herself, *Almost there*. But was she? After what felt like eons, she reached the cave, face red and raw and eyelashes frozen together. The cave dripped and echoed, but other than those sporadic sounds, an almost-numb silence befell her. The calm felt nice despite the persistent cold. To fight the freeze and still her shaking shoulders, she reached into her pocket and pulled out a matchbox and struck once again.

Not all her procrastinations disguised as daydreams were so dire, and most were much more strange and otherworldly. A hill stretched and curved out beyond her, expanding into a warm, bright meadow, and when she reached down to brush her fingertips against the petals of a flower she saw that her hands were veiny and wrinkled. She reached up to feel her lined face, her brittle hair, and the stoop of her spine, all of which betrayed her oldwomanhood. With a wise, playful smile, she plucked some purple plants and dropped them into her already brimming basket, then hobbled down the hill and through a murky but non-threatening wood to a little stone cottage. After entering through its fading blue, round door, she set her basket full of various natural ingredients on the table next to the fireplace in which hung a cauldron. Vials and herbs lined the crooked shelves along the wall. After gathering the needed elements from her basket and the haphazard shelves, she took down a match and box and bent over the logs, bones creaking in protest. She struck, and then sat back in a rocking chair made of knotted wood and began to hum a happy tune, knowing this potion would take a while to brew.

Shining robotic arms sifted through ancient rubble on an even more ancient planet, trying to find something. What, exactly, that something was, she couldn't tell you. Most things she picked up disintegrated immediately, and what didn't was mostly unrecognizable. Useless, it all was—the index uploaded into her mechanical eye didn't match with anything she was seeing. When she returned to the hangar, she'd have to report yet another failure to find something worth looking for on this forsaken space rock, which had, apparently, once been thriving with lush life. She'd been all around its vast surface, and her last destination assignment on this seemingly never ending globe, too, was a disappointment. For good measure, one last plunge into the debris. She withdrew, expectations low if not nonexistent, and found that one of her metal fingers had punctured something which still clung to it. A small, rectangular box, it was, and she plucked it off with her other mechanical hand and zoomed in on it with her unnatural eye. Tiny, light, loose objects rattled within it. The index in her eye dinged and identified it as a matchbox. Though she was supposed to leave any significant findings untampered with, she couldn't resist this one upon realizing its purpose. She messed around with it until finding a way to open the box without damaging it and pulled out one of its contents. Natural energy was so rare to behold—all light and heat in her galaxy made forever synthetic centuries ago. She struck the match against the matchbox, and the tiny flame she beheld filled her with wonder.

This imagining was much different—even before it fully blossomed in her imagination, she knew this one would inspire the limitless patience needed to wait for the real story to arrive in her mind's eye, whatever that would be. Her perspective shifted, and *They were tall and sturdy, feeling as if nothing could shake them, could move them, but still they felt... everything. It was a soft, but unwavering power that they had, that they were. A tree! That's what they were. Though Tree didn't know how they knew this, because they didn't have sight or hearing or any of the other senses they were used to. But Tree certainly felt the sun. And their roots burrowing deep into the earth. And the tips of their branches bursting with green, rich life. Despite that raw, bottomless energy, that vivacity that coursed through them, Tree also felt a profound calm. This calm was laced with a certainty, not in anything in particular, but a certainty nonetheless. And with that certainty came patience (a virtue they were not accustomed to). But as Tree, there it was, finally. Now, the waiting no longer mattered. They realized, suddenly and slowly, somehow, that there was no longer a need for a match, nor its literal or metaphorical strike. As Tree, they knew that the waiting was what it was all about. For hadn't inspiration already struck many times*

over? They'd been a survivor, an old witch, a cyborg, and now Tree, all while waiting for inspiration. Tree knew that their daydreams, their limitless imaginings were enough. There was no need for waiting

Even though Tree couldn't strike a match to signal the end of this one, she moved into her next daydream anyway.





MeS SA GE : Se n I

SARAH SU

For the past five years, I've sought comfort in the fact that I only hear from my ex-best friend at most two times a year. Guaranteed. Every February—on my birthday—and then again later in the year in September, when I wish her a happy birthday.

I keep Facebook Messenger on my phone because that was the app we used to communicate with each other. I barely message anyone on the app now, so sometimes seeing that blue-purple gradient speech bubble on my screen takes me back to all the conversations we used to have on there: messages of us planning and scheduling to see each other, rants about work and school, the latest drama about someone we used to go to elementary school with, and the texts telling me that she got home safely after a long night out at our favorite neighborhood bar, Hob Nob.

As strange as this may sound, there's a part of me that feels grateful that our birthdays are so spread out. Imagine if her birthday was in March—then I would only hear from her at the beginning of each year. And these aren't just generic, "happy birthday" texts. Last year, she wished beautiful things ahead for me in my new year. A previous year she wished me abundance. And that first year, when things started to change for us, she told me she was sorry that she couldn't be the friend that I wanted her to be, but that she was proud of me. Each time, I've been surprised, confused, yet touched by how thoughtful her messages are, and I feel some level of reassurance that she doesn't completely hate me and maybe, just maybe, one day, we'll be friends again.

During those six-month periods of silence, it's as if I'm waiting for something magical to happen as I navigate through my own headspace. It's me, giving her more time to process what's happened between us, even though it's been years at this point. It's me, seeing if she'll ever follow up with my invitation to catch up sometime. It's me, waiting to see if she'll finally hold herself accountable and be ready for a mature conversation. It's me, just wondering—do you even think about me anymore? As I recount every single scenario in my head of what went wrong. What I could have done more of, areas where I fell short as a friend. This time around, however, it has me feeling lighter. While flashbacks of moments we shared together still run through my mind, I'm starting to feel less and less resentful. Maybe this is what people call acceptance.

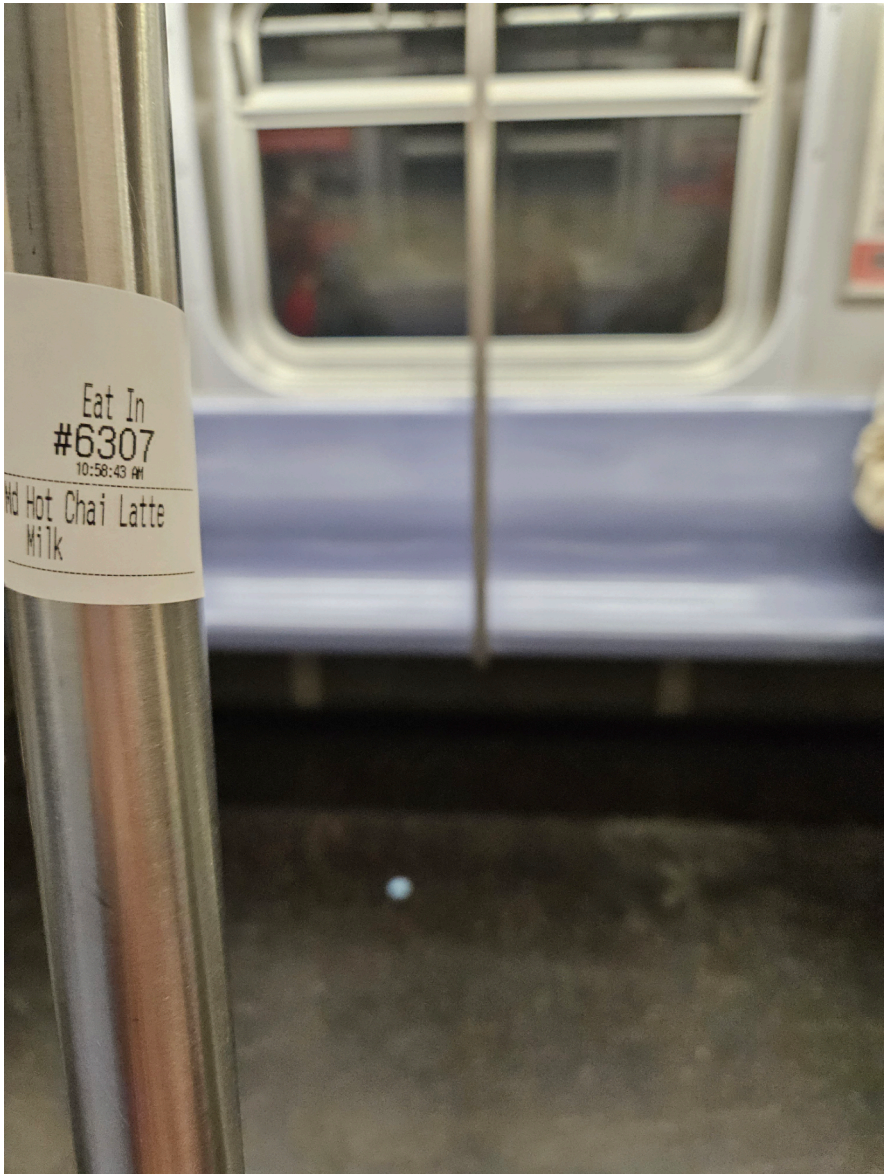
It's also made me wonder: if it weren't for birthdays, would I even hear from most of the people in my contacts list? Has this become the test determining who remains and is allowed into my life? It seems a bit arbitrary, but on social media, I've even seen videos where people unironically keep tabs on who wishes them a happy birthday, even going as far as making an Excel spreadsheet.

While I'm not the biggest fan of Excel—or tests for that matter—when February comes around on the calendar, I start to get angsty. I've always felt a certain pressure in regards to how to act and even celebrate my birthday, especially if it involves others. I'm uncomfortable when it comes to attention; sometimes I even feel guilty about receiving it, so as a result the last few years I've mainly spent the day by myself. I know there's people in my life that are thinking of me and want to celebrate me, but here I am, still thinking of my ex-best friend, more often than I'd like to admit. Even on my birthday, a day to celebrate me; I'm thinking of someone who, frankly, is no longer a part of my life and hasn't been for a long time.

This birthday, I got texts from my childhood and college friends, my brother, my parents, of course, old coworkers who I haven't spoken to for a period of time but am touched that they even remember. I also got the sweetest messages from new friends that I've made since moving to New York City from the San Francisco Bay Area. To say it's been easy making friends in NYC is actually rather true in terms of my experience living here—contrary to popular belief. But it doesn't encompass the constant anxiety I have when it comes to second guessing myself as a friend.

I feel so grateful, lucky even, that I've been able to meet so many wonderful people in such a short span of time. These people have become my support system, especially during a global pandemic, and have been patient with me as I continue to find the courage to be vulnerable in new friendships. They've shown me that I have yet to meet all the people in my life who will love me.

So when my phone vibrates at 11:57 PM, a few minutes before my actual birthday is over, I see a notification come through Facebook Messenger. Without even reading it, I swipe across to clear the notification, and decide to follow up with some of the new friends I've made about doing a belated get together: it's my time now to celebrate me.



WasHIng you AWaY

water pours down the drain,
faster than i can scrub away
every layer of my skin
still a layer of the pain

so i continue to scrub away

each layer, a memory
each day, a chance to wash it all away

another day, however,
the water flows the same

i raise the temperature
thinking i can burn these marks away

but still the water falls
slowly down the drain

so i return day after day,
as only time will end the waiting

for the pain of you
to go away





9:30 乗車

Me Meguro Line > G Ginza Line > 9:3

Meguro Station

N Nambuoku Line Local Urawamisono

Remain on board

Many empty seats

Ride 5 stops (12 min)

Shirokanedai Station

Shirokane-Takanawa Station

Azabu-Juban Station

Roppongi-Ichome Station

06 Tameike-sanno Sta.

Live: Less busy than usual

Walk about 1 min

06 Tameike-sanno Sta.

Live: Less busy than usual

9:41 PM

A Start

Pin 9:57 PM · 34 min

A tedium that includes the expectation of nothing but more tedium; a regret, right now, for the regret I'll have tomorrow for having felt regret today – huge confusions with no point and no truth, huge confusions. . .

. . . where, curled up on a bench in a railway station, my contempt dozes in the cloak of my discouragement. . .

. . . the world of dreamed images which are the sum of my knowledge as well as of my life. . .

To heed the present moment isn't a great or lasting concern of mine. I crave time in all its duration, and I want to be myself unconditionally.

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image sources:

the reader's digest, 5/1924

life magazine, 2/6/1939

life magazine, 11/18/1897

life magazine, 10/19/1911

the american review of reviews, 1/1912

good housekeeping magazine, 12/1912

text sources:

saturn apartments / hisae iwaoka

the book of disquiet / fernando pessoa

missing out / adam phillips

cover lyric:

"seasons (waiting on you)" / future islands

how to print & bind this zine at home:

materials, programs, tools:

- 6 sheets of regular printer paper
- 3-4 new staples
- a pushpin, awl, or other tool to make a small hole
- adobe acrobat reader (free) or other PDF reader that can print in “booklet” mode
- optional: an x-acto knife, to trim the edges

instructions:

- open the zine PDF in acrobat. go to file > print. under “page sizing and handling,” choose “booklet.”
- the zine will appear to print in a jumbled-up way. take the sheets from the printer in exactly the order they were printed. if you fold the whole stack in half, you’ll notice that the pages are in order. don’t fold it yet, though!
- being careful to keep the sheets in order, fold each page individually (to get the best crease). you can use the blunt edge of a butter knife or a bone folder to crease it well.
- now we’re going to create the holes, where we’ll push in the staples to bind. you can be as precise as you like with this step; using a ruler to ensure that every staple is at an equal distance on every sheet, or just using the staples themselves as a measuring tool and eye-balling it. mark where the holes should go with a pencil. 3-4 staples along the crease should be enough.
- use a pushpin or awl to poke holes through each sheet. you can do this individually sheet-by-sheet, or use a binder clip to hold the sheets together and do them all at once.
- when all the holes are ready, align the holes of each sheet and press the staples through. feed the staples through the holes from the backs of the sheets, so that the prongs of the staple are on the inside of the crease. (the flat backs of the staples will be on the spine of your zine.)
- when staples are through all the sheets, use the blunt edge of a butter knife or a bone folder to fold down the prongs of each staple.
- fold the zine, and use the blunt edge on the spine crease a few times for good measure.
- optional: using a ruler and an x-acto knife, trim the uneven edges of the booklet.

